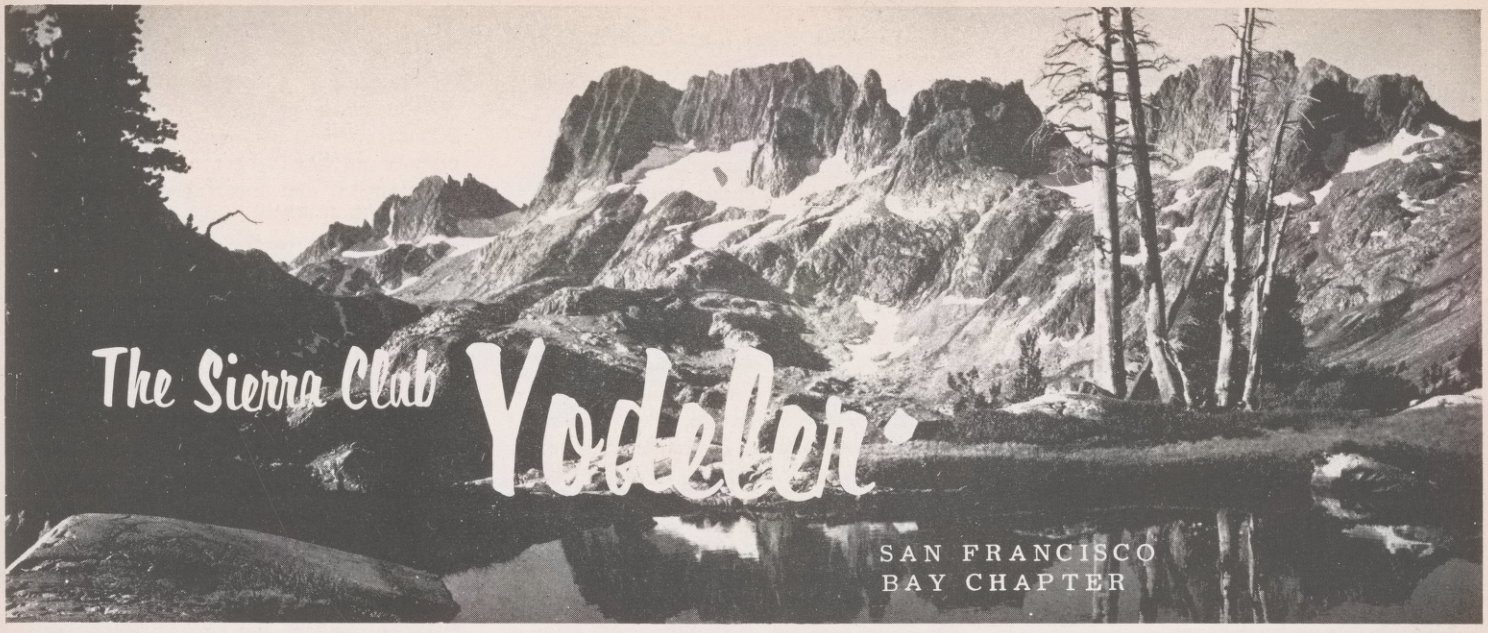

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CONSERVATION NOTES

National Park status for the northern Cascades advanced an important step on January 6. Representative Thomas M. Pelly introduced a bill (H.R. 9360) providing for study of the Cascades by the National Park Service, directing the Department of Agriculture to assist the Park Service, and calling for a report within one year. The bill was referred to the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs.

* * * * * * * * * * * *

A circular sent out by the Mayor of Berkeley on possible city improvements says, "We are currently raising generations of children who do not know what it is to play on grass." There are other outdoor pleasures which are almost extinct. Silence is one of them, as lakeside vacationers know only too well. So we endorse most heartily a recent order of the National Park Service restricting the use of motorized watercraft on the three southern arms of Yellowstone Lake.

But the motorboat interests have protested and there will be a hearing, to be held at Cody, Wyoming, February 3, at which Senator Eugene McGhee of Wyoming will preside.

Here is an opportunity to throw bouquets instead of brickbats at the N.P.S. Letters sent to Senator McGhee at the Senate Offices, Washington, D.C., might encourage the Park Service to keep a few miles where calm water meets quiet forest and a canoeist may come upon a family of ducks, or a beaver at work.

C.M.C.

VIENNA - Dec. 16, My First Ski Trip with the Austrians

In preparation for the coming ski season, I had purchased a pair of skis for $4.00, ski pants for $3.80, and a pair of hand-made ski boots. The first two items were purchased in the national pawn shop where everything is sold to the highest bidder.

With two dollars worth of repair on the skis, my equipment and I were ready for the snow. The students' club which I had joined announced a ski trip for December 13. Since I knew that many of the foreign students in the club would be skiing for the first time, I envisioned a trip to a rather gentle slope, complete with lifts, hot coffee, and a warm room.

Two days before the trip I learned that only an Austrian girl and myself had signed up for the outing and arrangements had been made for us to go with the University (of Vienna) Touring Association. Acutally I didn't learn the name or the nature of this group until we were on the bus heading toward one of the few areas near Vienna that might have enough snow for skiing. By then I had learned that there would be no lift and that we would have to climb. This was not particularly distressing, since I looked forward to the exercise; but I was not prepared for anything particularly adventurous.

The bus took us to the 1500 foot level where there was very little snow. A cog railway carried us up a mountain through the first genuine snow storm of the season to the 5400 foot level. As I trudged away from the train station and followed our little band with that trusting confidence which only dumb animals, small children, and Americans in foreign lands

Continued on Page 2

Honored With New Jobs

For the first time under new By-Laws, the new Executive Committee took office and the new Chapter Officers were elected by the Committee at the January meeting, instead of November, as in the past. The November and December meetings allowed newcomers to the Executive Committee to audit the sessions and find out just what goes on at executive committee meetings. By January they all knew each other well enough to nominate officers with confidence, and the result was some lively balloting and a final choice of two old hands and two newcomers to fill the four offices.

Our new Chapter Chairman is Philip Falconer, who has been on the committee for the past year. (He completed State examinations in Architecture only a few days before the meeting and now steps into a Chapter job which is almost as demanding).

Vice Chairman is Bruce Grant, newly elected to the committee but well known in River Touring Circles. The Secretary is Margaret Gwinn, also a newcomer. Wesley Bunnelle will be Treasurer. He has valuable previous experience on the committee and the added benefit of an ex-Chapter Treasurer in his own family.

C.M.C.

SAVE THIS DATE

The Sierra Club Annual Dinner (Northern Section) will be held on May 7, 1960, at the VILLAGE, Columbus at Lombard, San Francisco.

Details of the program will be announced later by chairman Frank Hibbard.

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Vienna Ski Trip - Cont.

develop, I did not realize I would not see that tiny cog railroad train again, at least for several weeks.

After 20 minutes of stumbling through the storm over an obscure rocky trail, we came to a hut and most of the people who rode the cog railroad unloaded their small packs inside. I was not observant enough to notice that those individuals who were with our bus did not drop their packs.

When we picked up our skis and started off again, I thought we were walking to the ski area and would return later. This next phase of our trip took 25 minutes before we came to a couple of spots where the snow was deep enough for a short run. These spots were surrounded by vigorous young Austrians working their way up the hillside for a short trip down the narrow center strip. After an hour or so I paused long enough to start a conversation with one of my comrades and learned that we would be leaving this territory in a different direction.

The Austrian girl who guided me back to the hut for my rucksack was very tolerant. I was afraid that I'd lose sight of her in the storm, because I had long ago given up using my glasses, and my 20/200 vision enabled me to distinguish her black parka from the rocks only as long as she was moving. Just as we finished our 25-minute return trip, our group was starting on the next phase of the day's activity. We were to climb a small peak with our skis on our shoulders. Actually this part of the trip was not so bad. I can flounder uphill through snowdrifts almost as well as most Austrian girls.

We had a bite to eat in a hut at the 6000 foot level and there I began to learn what I was to endure for the rest of the

CONTINUED NEXT COLUMN

Continued from Column 1.

afternoon. I knew that it was 2:30 with only two hours of daylight. I also was aware that our bus was 3500 feet below in a little village where there was only enough snow for a small snowball fight. My question as to how we would negotiate the eight-mile journey brought the obvious answer: when there was enough snow we would ski; when there was too little we would carry our skis.

My hopes for wide gentle slopes for eight miles were soon shattered. There was actually lots of snow in the first stone-studded canyon which we traversed, but it was all powder. No firm base provided protection against large concealed rocks. After the first persons made it through, the skillful skier could slip through the openings and miss the larger rocks. However, my stiff-knee-posterior-protruding snowplow ski style proved to be particularly ineffective over the boulders.

The boulders were bad enough, but in between the boulders one could find many small bush-like trees. At least I could find them. Once when I was lying on my back thrashing around with my skis hopelessly entagled in one of those aforementioned trees, an Austrian maiden came along and released my bindings. She tried to raise my spirits by assuring me that after a little way we would come to a stretch that I could probably negotiate with my skis on my feet instead of my shoulder.

Luckily for me the leader of the group was very observant and realized that I would never have made it without moral support. He and his girl friend waited for me every few hundred yards as I floundered along. After darkness fell, my radar-equipped Austrian friends took off their skis and we stumbled along through the treacherous powder. Fortunately for me it was all downhill on this part of the trip so every time I slipped and fell I rolled a little closer to our destination. Finally we reached a snow-covered country road and after a short distance we rounded a bend and saw before us the most beautiful piece of scenery I have ever seen in Austria—the glowing red tail lights of the loveliest bus in the entire world.

I was surprised and rather pleased to learn that I had dragged my dripping wet carcass into the last hut only ten minutes behind everyone else. Perhaps I didn't improve my skiing technique, but after eight miles through knee-deep powder in a variety of positions ranging between horizontal and vertical, I did manage to develop a rather effective stumble-shuffle-flop which should prove invaluable if I make another cross-country tour in a snow-storm with my vigorous Austrian friends.

Jim Hackler
bei Pension Merlingen
Wien 8, Osterreich
Zeltgasse 3

REPORT FROM INDIA

This is just a note to say that if any of you come to India, try and include Sikkim on your itinerary. It is neither remote nor hard to get to and yet is about as beautiful and colorful a place as one can find. It takes only ten hours to go from Calcutta to Gangtok by plane and bus. You do have to apply for an entry permit from the Deputy Commissioner at Darjeeling, about two weeks in advance.

I've just returned from a long weekend trip up there where I went to see and film the annual lama dances. Both the dances and the setting were as exotic as anything I've ever seen. The dances are performed by men wearing brilliant costumes and weird masks and the music is supplied by lamas playing long horns and drums. The dances are held outdoors in front of the monastery which alone is colorful enough but in addition to this the area is surrounded by fluttering prayer flags and far beyond the mountains loom up, culminating in Kanchenjunga. And to an outsider, the audience wearing Sikkimese and Tibetan style dress, is as interesting as the dancers. Especailly since the dance goes on for two days and one's attention wanders at times.

The hospitality of the people makes the visit even more enjoyable. The Maharaja had us all to lunch both days, and a Sikkimese family kept me as a guest in their home during my stay. My host, Kazi D. Dahdul, is the Secretary of the State of Sikkim and as he enjoys talking to foreigners, he is the man to contact when going to Gangtok. Anyone can be assured of a warm welcome. Right now the Sikkimese officials have the feeling that Americans come to Sikkim only to hunt the yeti (sopa), but they think the country has much more to offer than that. Especially since they consider the yeti as only legendary now even if it did exist at one time. It is lucky if it is extinct as it was forty feet high and loved to put cows in the tops of trees as a prank.

If anyone wants more information about Sikkim and how to get there, let me know as even travel agents in Calcutta regard Sikkim as a blank on the map. Kathmandu is the favorite place of the agents and they have smothered it with tourists —every plane going there is jammed with elderly American ladies. Meanwhile Gangtok remains untouched.

—James F. Seitz

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FOR SALE: SENT TO A FRIEND IN ITALY 12,000 LIRE FOR LATEST SKI BOOTS AND THEY ARRIVED AS FOLLOWS: LA DALOMITE SUPERIORE QUALITA, MAN'S BOOTS SIZE 41 (in Italy) (10 in U.S). IF YOU CAN USE THIS SIZE, THEY'RE YOURS FOR THE 12,000 LIRE ($25 U.S. MONEY). WORTH $45 IF BOUGHT HERE. CALL MATILDA SELIGER, SU 1-0694

BEGINNERS SNOW SHOE TRIP

The beginner's snowshoe trip, delightfully led by Gail LaFortune of the Mother Lode hapter, was lots of fun. We, beginners all, toured the warming hut, and taking turns breaking trail, made our way to the top of Signal Hill to the panoramic view of the winter wonderland of trees covered with freshly fallen snow glistening in the sun, stretching for miles in all directions. We could see Donner Lake just below us. We stopped at the warming hut on our way back and had hot coffee with our lunches.

Starting out Sunday morning we felt like experts so on our way we spread out and packed down the lower slope for skiing. We had our lunch on top of the ridge and came back for an early start home only to find our car snowed under. Two buses alongside were waiting for a tow truck so some young fellows waiting there helped us dig out our car saying that we were the ones who had packed down their ski run and they had a wonderful time skiing on it.

Snowshoeing is a wonderful way to get out into the unspoiled beauty of our snow covered mountains. We enjoyed meeting the crowd from the Mother Lode Chapter and we feel we should have joint trips more often. —Esther Peters

Advertisement

WIND SCULPTURE — Hand Polished High altitude (10,000-11,000) Pine handcrafted into pins, tie bars, table pieces, wall decorations, capturing the color and fragrance of summer campfires.

Available at the Arts & Crafts Co-op Inc., ART MART upstairs in the new Co-op Food Store, Shattuck at Cedar in Berkeley

For Sale: SKI BOOTS, Raichel K53, size 8N, fits shoe size 8 1/2 to 9. Excellent condition, $23.00. Call days, Rosemary Schmit - SUtter 1-2289.

ROOM FOR RENT. Austrian lady has single room, kitchen privileges, share bath. Clean, near. $40 month. Near College and Alcatraz, north Oakland. OL 3-5138

Age Dated Subscriptions

The "Yodeler" staff in charge of subscriptions is now sending out a large number of those postcards which say "Your Yodeler subscription expires on Volume and Number" (as filled in). The Chapter Executive Committee decided that the $2.00 for 20 issues would have to continue for some time yet, in spite of the high hopes we have that some way will be found to send the "Yodeler" free to all Chapter members at least a few times in the year. At 10¢ a copy, it is (we hope) mighty good value.

MOUNTAIN EARS HEAR

N.S.S. chairman Joanne Taylor is a kind-hearted Sierra Clubber and when the teacher who substituted for her while she was out with the flu turned out to be a very good substitute, Joanne thoughtfully broke her knee while playing volleyball with her pupils her first day back on the job. She's out of the hospital by now.

* * * * * * * * * * * *

Frances Payne, who is a Sierra Club member, married D. Stickney, who because he was not a Sierra Club member before he married Frances, does not have his full first name in the membership files. They are living in San Mateo at 435 Hillcrest Road.

* * * * * * * * * * * * * *

Ray Simpson, club member who likes to roam the world of California, sent in his Yodeler subscription renewal from his winter address, Squaw Valley Lodge. This is working for a living?

NEWS FROM OUTER SPACE

The Yodeler's worldwide circulation brought two stories accompanying subscription renewals. If knapsacker Barbara Schill, writing from Hawaii, and C. Shepard Lee, normally of Santa Barbara but temporarily in the South Seas, had "stood at home", Yodeler would not have been able to offer the following:

From Miss Schill: Would you like to know how the Hawaiian Trail and Mountain Club celebrates New Year's Day?

Hikers here forsake the trails to enjoy the sport ti-leaf sliding.

The ti-leaf has blades that grow two to three feet long, very shiny, thick and strong in texture. They do not wilt easily and thus are used for many things. They are slit into hula skirts, arranged on tables for luaus, for flowers and laulaus (a tasty dish). It grows on South Sea islands, in India and southern China.

Ti-leaf sliding is not a clean sport; in fact it's quite dirty. It can be thrilling

CONT. BACK PAGE.

EXPEDITION IN BAJA

There was a cloud of dust and sand and a spinning of tires, followed by the slamming of many car doors as eager volunteers ran to give the car a push. We were on our way into Diable Canyon in Baja, California, with the San Diego Chapter of the Sierra Club over the Thanksgiving holidays. On this expedition, led by Edward (Bud) Bernhard and Jean (Becky) McSheehy, there were fifteen cars containing about fifty people and a great collection of assorted gear. We were traaeling on an unpredictable dirt road on which the low centered cars were plowing off the high center of the road.

Starting from a spot about one hundred miles south of Mexicali and twenty miles from the small fishing village of San Felipe, we traveled forty miles over a dirt road. Our camp was on part of the huge Rancho Santa Clara at the foot of Diablito Canyon. Not far away was Diablo Canyon, a gorge about 4,500 feet deep, which divides El Pica cho del Diablo (10,436) Baja California's highest mountain, from the high, forested San Pedro Martir plateau. There was water a few hundred yards from camp, but good drinking water was a twenty minute scramble further up Diablito Canyon.

After dinner that night there was a short campfire at which we introduced ourselves and got acquainted. Bud Bernhard took time to explain how easy it was to get lost in this area, illustrating the topography with small piles of sand, and warning that we should not hike off alone or without a watch in the party. He also explained that there would be a sign-out sheet on a Jeep on which everyone should put his name, destination, and the time upon leaving, and cross out his name when he returned.

The next morning we started through a forest of huge Cardon cactus, similar to our Sargaro, for Diablo Canyon, which we reached in about forty-five minutes. The canyon was very narrow and had a small stream in it. A short distance up we came to a pool and waterfall which we had to get over in order to continue.

Bud Bernhard organized a small squad of strong men which would get the group over this obstacle. At the waterfall half the men were below in the pool, icy cold and four to six feet deep, handing gear up to the men at the top of the falls. We waded in one at a time, were boosted up, grabbed a rope, clambered up a steep, slick, granite wall, and were helped over the top. In this way everyone was able to get over the falls and we ate lunch at a small, clear pool a little further up the canyon. In the afternoon we wandered on through Diablo Canyon in twos and threes at our leisure, returning to the

CONT. BACK PAGE.

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BUT THE BIRDS DIDN'T WANT IT—

The Natural Science Field Trip to the Los Banos Game Refuge January 10 was a very exclusive affair. Only three persons went.

Leader Joanne Taylor was unable to make it, being confined to a hospital bed (see Mountain Ears Hear). She was also unable to answer phone calls as to whether the trip would be made if the rains continued. Bob and Marjorie (Jerry) Lewis and Esther Abraham were the three who decided to take the trip, come ----- or ------.

Led by the Bird Refuge ranger, Mr. Smoke, the three drove and slid their two cars to the end of the refuge, then dismounted (the road was that slippery) and slid more until they reached firmer ground in the fields. At this point they were left to their own explorations. They saw much in the way of wildfowl, but most of the usual inhabitants had left for home. Hunting season ended two days before the trip and the birds knew it.

When the Lewises were ready to return to the city, they had lost track of Esther. They told Mr. Smoke and he promised to be on the lookout for her.

As the Lewises turned off the road to the left on the way back to the highway, they passed a sign reading, "No cars permitted beyond this point." Jerry was sure they had come the way the sign said not to go. Bob was sure they hadn't.

They returned the way the sign said not to go.

At the next NSS meeting they learned from Esther that she had obeyed the sign and gone the other way. Fortunately the ranger found her before it was too late.

Which is what happens to a Club trip story when you let a woman write it up.

—As told to A.R. by Jerry Lewis

Outer Space - Cont.

and often dangerous when you end up in a clump of trees or over some dropoff.

Equipment is minimal: for all that is required are your oldest clothes, a wet muddy slope and a few ti-leaves.

The technique is to sit on the ti-leaf, grasp its stems, lean back, feet in the air, and start sliding. It is possible to slide with one or more persons riding behind you, each on his own leaf but with a leg-waist lock, similar to tobogganing. When the slide is pan (finished), the ti-leaf is replaced in the ground and regenerates itself for next year.

In the olden days, Hawaiian royalty used wooden sleds and went sliding over stones. The commoners instead plucked the ti-leaf and found softer ground on the muddy slopes.

So this is how it began and how it continues with the hikers of Oahu.

From Mr. Lee: Have been three months in South Seas. Hiked the Milford Track in New Zealand. Sybaritic. You hike 10 miles a day for three days. Carry waterproof and toilet articles and two sheets only. Encounter a hut and hot tea every day for lunch. Scenery excellent. Also hiked on the mountain above Papeete. The trail was a ledge often three inches wide on a very steep hillside. I slid off into the brush 20 times in four miles. Wet through all the time.

Baja Expedition - Cont.

waterfall about three o'clock. Going down the waterfall was much easier than climbing up, for we just slid down the steep wall into the pool. After most of us were down in the pool we formed a fire line and passed the gear down and over to dry land. Then we dried off and headed for camp.

Around the campfire that night we discussed the day's expedition and sang songs, accompanied by Ivy Foster's auto harp. For the next day we made plans for two hikes; one up a nearby ridge for a view, the other up Diablito Canyon.

Early the next day one party left to climb the ridge while the rest of the group explored Diablito Canyon, returning to camp early in the afternoon. At that night's campfire, we talked about our travels, sang, and made plans for our departure early the next morning, collecting food to present to our hosts at Rancho Santa Clara on the way out.

We were sad to leave such an unusual and fascinating place, but looked forward to the day when there would be time to explore Diablo Canyon further and perhaps climb El Picacho del Diablo.

—Edith Gauger

FIRST AID COURSE

The River Touring Section is organizing a Red Cross standard first aid course in the East Bay on Wednesday evenings. All interested Sierra Club members are cordially invited. There will be 10 sessions. Phone Elsa Bailey, OLympic 4-5640.

The Sierra Club